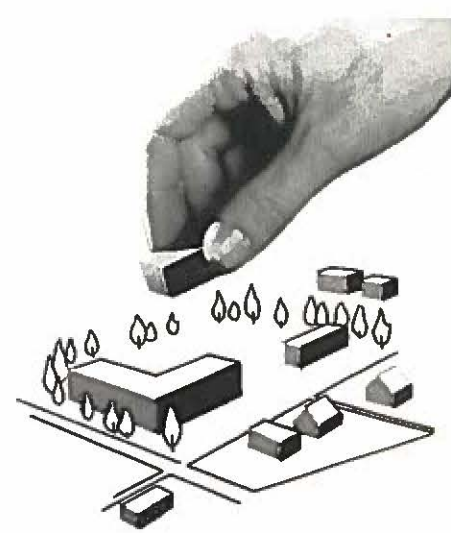


layout for living

- co-operative communities
- conference registration
- new officers

layout for living

No. 7, september 1947



national conference on community planning

Within a month of the appearance of this issue, we shall be gathered together in Montreal for the First Annual General Meeting of the Association. That meeting will be the occasion for a frank review of our first year. It will afford us opportunity to profit by the greater experience of kindred associations in Great Britain and the United States.

Those who come to the National Conference on Community Planning (they will include many of our own Members, as well as our professional and official friends) will also be guests at some concurrent sessions on planning arranged by the Engineering Institute of Canada; they will be asked to take part in deliberations on our No. 1 social problem, to be conducted by the National Committee on Housing.

Thus we go to Montreal to meet each other, to learn from our specialists, and to put our requirements up to them. Most essential of all, we go to forge our program of action for the coming year. We shall never again in this Association face a more crucial challenge than in 1948. Indifference and obstruction on every hand threaten the kind of communities we stand for: in these pages will be found your final chance to enlist in the first national sortie-in-force of the pro-planners.

case study no. 1: heathbridge

Ninety percent of the land in any community is residential. These pages are bound by that fact to be taken up with housing matters. Whether CPAC will confine its corporate attention to the *design* of groups of houses and their ancillary facilities, or will go further, and concern itself with the economic means required to realize those designs for the benefit of all in our communities, must clearly be decided at our National Conference.

Meanwhile there is a growing conviction that to gain both desirable standards and economic realization we shall have to think of houses not individually, but as associated parts of a larger unit: the neighbourhood. This conviction is world wide; Humphrey Carver has expressed it thus in a recent issue of *Canadian Art*: "It is, in fact, in the design of groups of houses, in the arrangement of numbers of units into architectural compositions that there lies the future opportunity for the development of a lively Canadian vernacular art. This is the direction in which we must steer if the Canadian family is to escape from the oppressive manner in which the post-war housing programme is now being carried out—standardization we must have; but it must be like the standardization of the keyboard on which an infinite variety of compositions can be played."

Several groups of Canadian families have been steering in this direction. We have invited a number of them to tell their own stories and illustrate their results in these pages. A variety of organizational arrangements exist; but these groups have in common the aim of developing a sizable tract of land for residential use by the group. And much of their experience is of use to all responsible for the design and economics of any kind of housing.

co-operative building of a community

by harriet edith lang



(Photo: John Steele)
A few members of the Co-operative Residential Communities group of Toronto, from left to right: L. W. Mitchell (President); Vernon Lang (Director); Mrs. Joan Fairfield; R. L. Markon (Vice-President); and Melville Shannon (Manager). Professional and junior executive people, the CRC believe they have a more satisfactory way of getting housing within the price range dominant today.

Housing is the average family's biggest problem, even in normal times when plenty of accommodation is available. People who are looking for an ideal environment to live in can rarely find it in existing urban developments. Consequently they are faced with the necessity of *creating neighbourhoods of their own*. But an individual family looking for a house for itself does not normally have any opportunity to plan the neighbourhood around its house: only the state, a municipality or a large land-owner can do that.

Also, if the house itself is to be properly planned to suit both the family's needs and its bank account, it usually has to be built as a new house. Building a new house, for most families, means sinking the savings of a lifetime in one investment, leaving little or no funds for the technical assistance required to ensure that such a major investment will be the best possible house that can be built for a given amount of money.

There are, therefore, two problems: good neighbourhood planning and economical but good construction. Neither of these problems can be solved satisfactorily by the individual himself, but they can both be solved when a number of individuals work together. One family cannot become the owner of a large tract of undeveloped land, but several families, acting as one, can. And, when they have made the planning of a new neighbourhood possible by acquiring the necessary land, further group action will enable them to afford, on a shared basis, the technical and legal assistance needed for planning and construction.

This line of reasoning has led a group of Toronto people to tackle the housing problem by working together as a consumer co-operative. Starting as an educational organization they promoted a planned com-

munity development for 16 of their member families.

It all started in 1944 when some families who were trying to raise children in crowded apartment houses began thinking about building houses for themselves. They were looking for houses of sufficient size to take care of their growing families, with plenty of play space away from traffic, and easy access to schools and shops. They were convinced that if they could buy a tract of land as a group and subdivide it according to their needs they could provide themselves with pleasant, spacious surroundings at reasonable cost.

Many meetings were held to study the possibility of such a project, and the group's membership started to expand. When the complexity of the subject and the almost complete lack of local precedent became apparent the group decided that the best thing to do would be to form a large research and educational organization which could focus expert knowledge on their problems. They therefore formed the Institute of Modern Residential Planning, set up on co-operative principles under a non-profit charter.

Experts in legal and architectural matters were called in to make reports to the Institute on various aspects of the co-operative housing proposals, and the members eventually decided to attempt a large project of about 250 families—a large enough undertaking to make possible some substantial construction economies and the provision of central heating and other community facilities.

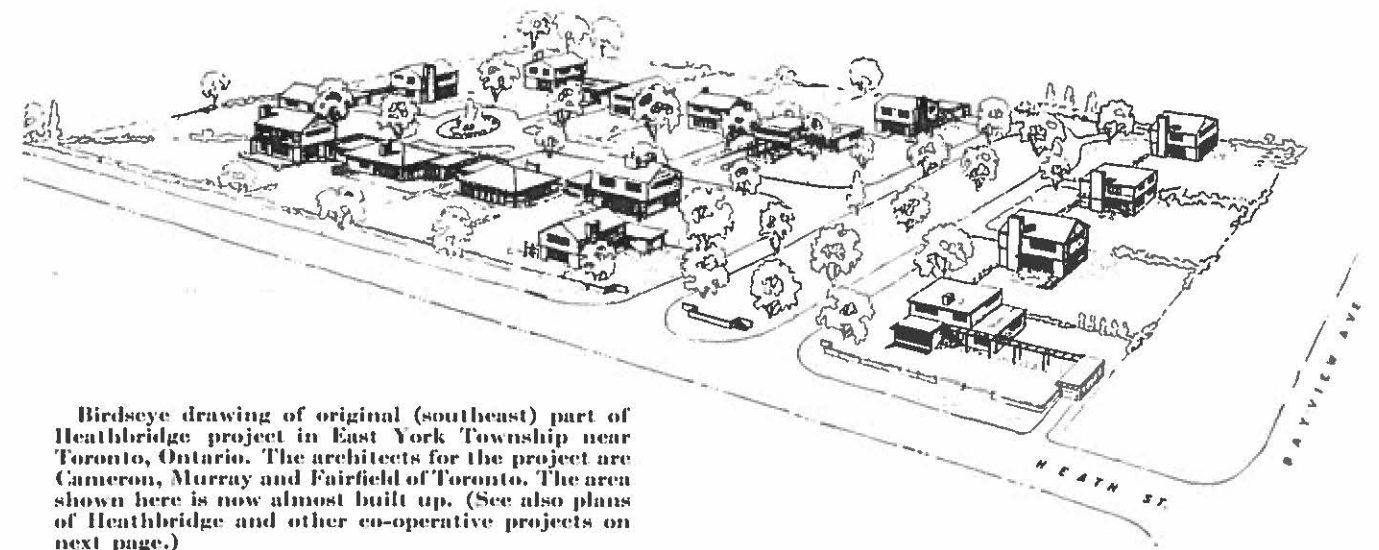
A land acquisition committee was formed and empowered to take options on suitable sites, using money deposited in an option fund by the members. Certain legal and financial requirements for a site were stipulated. It was hoped that suitable land might be obtained

in Toronto's suburbs for about \$500 per acre. Such property had to be physically attractive with most of land level enough for building; it had to have water mains and sewers close by (or soil suitable for septic tanks), public transportation facilities, a public school and stores within easy walking distance.

Armed with these instructions the committee began to hunt for large blocks of land. Many sites were investigated in the summer of 1945, but in all cases either the price was too high, utilities were not available, or prohibitive municipal restrictions on size of house were encountered. In two cases representations were made to the local Ratepayers' Associations for support in requesting alleviation of these restrictions to permit construction of smaller houses. The Institute argued that the building of architect-designed houses on spacious lots in a planned community would ensure stable values in the area regardless of the actual size of the houses. However, neither of these Ratepayers' Associations would consent to any alteration in the minimum size of house required in the areas concerned,

The site plan laid out contained lots 50 and 60 feet wide by 100 feet deep and a park strip. There is a single entrance to the project and the street system consists of a loop with a cul-de-sac off the west side of it. (See p. 4.) Eight houses face on each street. Attempts were made by the architects to have the houses oriented on their lots so as to avoid interfering with neighbours' views, and to take maximum advantage of lot shapes. Most of the members followed their advice in this matter, but not all, and it was decided that in future projects, the location of houses on lots would have to be decided by the community on the architect's advice rather than by the individual owners. All wiring for telephones and electricity was placed underground, the members of the group agreeing to share the additional expense over and above what the telephone company and the township hydro were prepared to invest.

As to house-design, meetings of the group with the architects resulted in development of two house-types: a bungalow which could have two or three bedrooms; and a two-storey house with three bedrooms and a split



and, since this made it necessary to build far more expensive houses than Institute members wanted, these sites had to be abandoned.

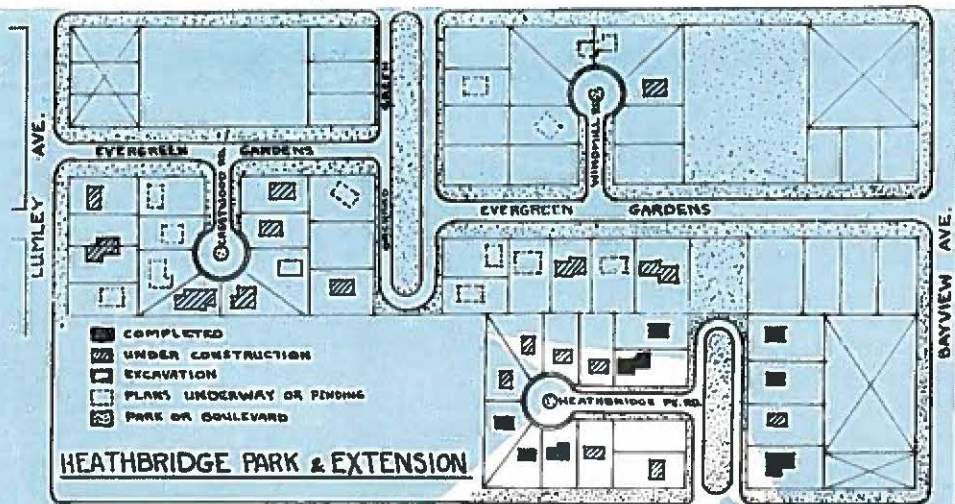
Somewhat frustrated by its inability to secure a suitable large site, the Institute decided to see what could be done about co-operative housing on a smaller scale. The outcome of this was Heathbridge Park, a development of 16 houses fairly close to the centre of the city. The property here was considerably more expensive than in suburban areas previously investigated, and therefore the lots had to be much smaller than originally desired.

The Heathbridge Park project grew out of a series of meetings at which a group of Institute members decided to purchase a tract of about 2½ acres of land. The architects developed a site plan which was surveyed and registered. The members chose their lots and completed the purchase, agreeing at the same time to pay for their share of the cost of installing sewers and water-

bathroom upstairs, and living-dining-room, kitchen with breakfast nook, and study on the ground floor. Within reason the architects made certain changes of internal details of these type plans without increasing their fee, which was lower than it would have been on individual houses. Also, a considerable variety of materials were used on the different houses. In most cases the lower storey was of solid brick, while the second storey is of brick, wide clapboard or asbestos shingles. Three of the members had special houses designed by the same firm at the (higher) regular fee.

The Institute arranged mortgages and construction contracts for the individuals, one contractor doing all the houses in the one development. As only "cost plus" contracts were available in the industry at that time, the best that could be done was to peg the "plus" portion or contractor's fee at an amount based on the original estimated cost. Construction on some of the

continued on page six

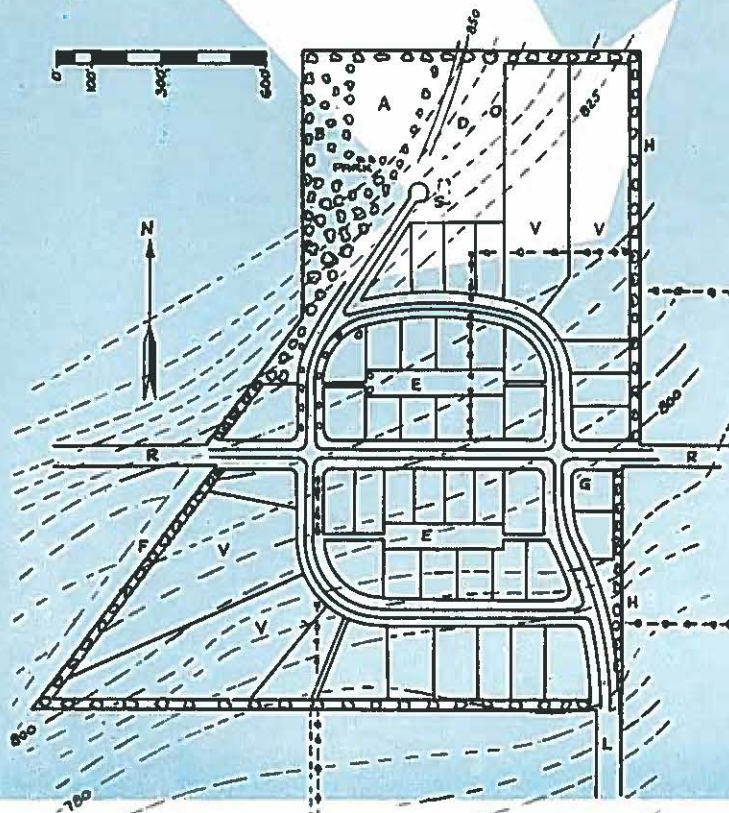


heathbridge park near toronto

The centre of Toronto is to the southwest (i.e. off the lower left corner of the plan). Note ample areas for shops and playgrounds.

peterborough

Preliminary layout by Community Homes Association of Peterborough, Ontario. The centre of the city is to the southeast of this project. Note again ample recreation areas to be retained. The Association consists mainly of young professionals.



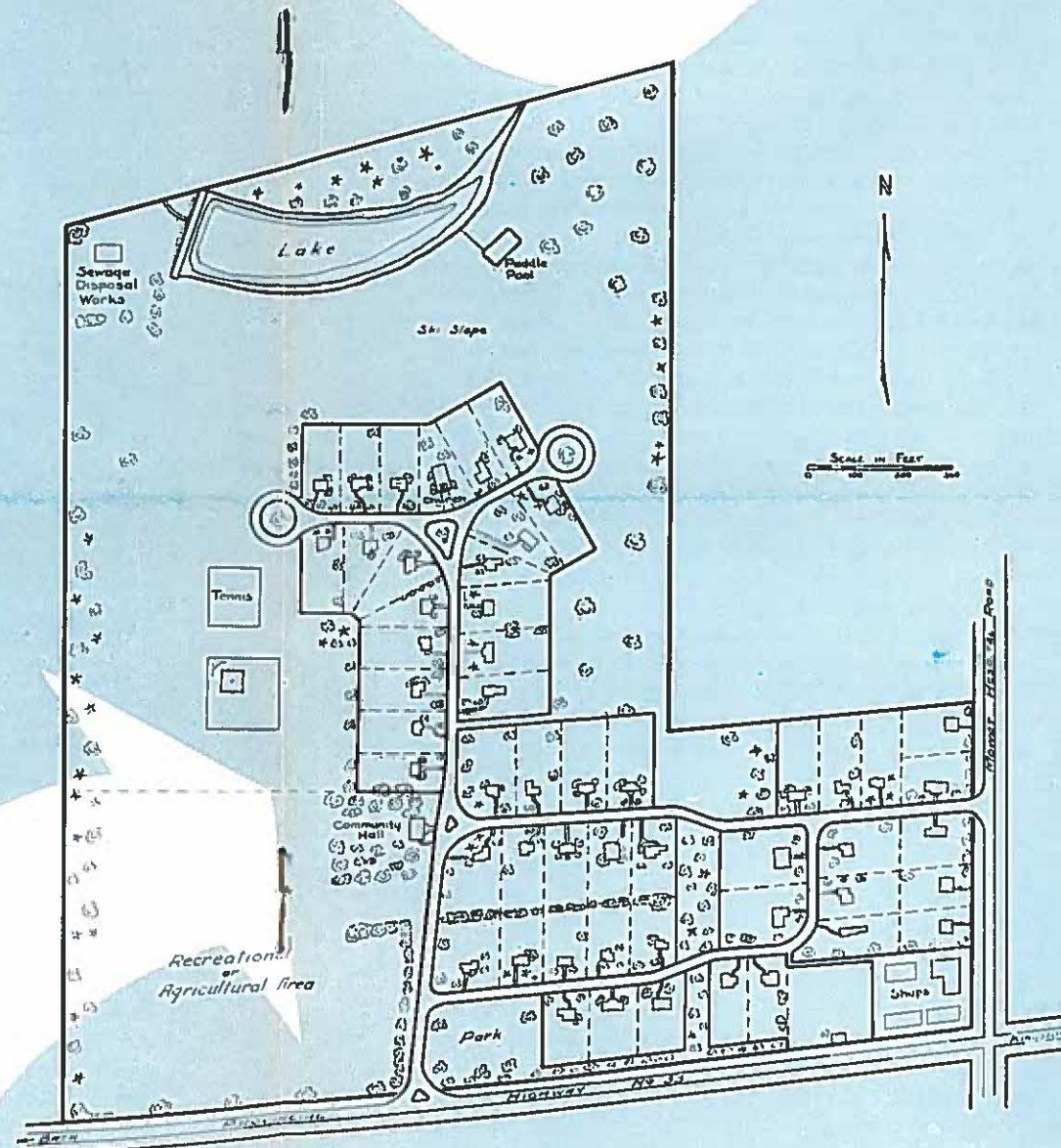
grenville park near kingston

Plan (since amended) of a project by the Grenville Park Co-operative Housing Association of Kingston. (Some lots have been made larger than shown.) The group have studied similar work by other groups mentioned here and those in the United States and Britain. The Association is incorporated as a co-operative; Watson Balharrie, Ottawa architect, is consultant. About 30 families belong, many connected with Queens University.

co-operative communities

in ontario

The Co-op buys the land, registers the subdivision, installs the services; the individual member makes his contract with the builder, who achieves some economies in putting up scores of houses of a few standard types on one piece of land. Houses are placed with regard for sunlight and neighbours' views; some have such features as solar and radiant heating. Power and phone lines are underground.



GRENVILLE PARK

TENTATIVE PLAN OF COMPLETED DEVELOPMENT
GRENVILLE SOCIETY — KINGSTON

National Conference on Community Planning Montreal, October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1947

Registration Form

(Please mail to Rm. 361, 56 Lyon St., Ottawa, Ont.)

1. I accept your invitation to attend

2. I expect to arrive in Montreal

I should like bedroom reserved at the Mount Royal Hotel

3. I should like my 1947-48 Membership Card to be ready on my arrival at the Registration Desk, Mount Royal Hotel.

4. I shall come to these sessions:

Thursday, October 2nd

☐ 10.30 a.m.—Opening general session—Aims of Conference, Reports and Nominations—MOUNT ROYAL HOTEL

☐ 1.00 p.m.—Luncheon — (Arranged by the EIC).

☐ 2.30 p.m.—SHOP TALKS for engineers and other building professionals, planning board members and officials. Sponsored by the EIC.

OR

☐ METHODS OF CITIZEN ORGANIZATION—Films, displays and discussion.

☐ 7.30 p.m.—Dinner—Address by a distinguished American. (Arranged by the EIC). NORMANDIE ROOF

Friday, October 3rd

ROUND TABLES.

☐ 9.00 a.m.—Housing.

☐ 11.00 a.m.—The Neighbourhood — Relationship of Traffic, Recreation and Education to Housing.

☐ 1.00 p.m.—Luncheon—Address on Planning Achievement in America by Hugh Pomeroy, Director of Westchester County Planning Department. NORMANDIE ROOF.

☐ 2.30 p.m.—Bus tour of Montreal FROM MOUNT ROYAL.

☐ 5.00 p.m.—Reception at City Hall.

☐ 8.15 p.m.—"THE VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS IN THE BRITISH PLANNING SCENE"—Address by F. J. Osborn, Chairman of Executive, Town and Country Planning Association.

Saturday, October 4th

☐ 9.00 a.m.—The Citizens' Planning Role in Canada—CARDY HALL, MOUNT ROYAL HOTEL.

☐ 12.30 p.m.—ELECTION OF 1947-48 COUNCIL.

(NOTE: A National Conference on Housing is being held on Saturday afternoon, October 4th, under the auspices of the National Committee on Housing. Delegates to the CPAC Conference are invited to attend. If you intend to come to this meeting on Housing, please inform the Secretary, National Committee on Housing, Mr. George T. Bates, 80 Sackville Street, Halifax, N.S.)

Conférence Nationale sur l'Urbanisme
Montréal, les 2, 3 et 4 octobre 1947

Formule d'inscription

1. J'accepte votre invitation et je serai présent

Prénom Nom de famille

Adresse

2. J'arriverai à Montréal

le à
Date Heure

Veuillez réserver une chambre pour moi à l'Hôtel Mont-Royal

3. J'aimerais que ma carte de membre pour l'année 1947-48 soit préparée pour mon arrivée et remise au guichet d'inscription de l'Hôtel Mont-Royal.

4. Je serai présent aux séances pointées:

Jeu. le 2 octobre

- ☐ 10.30 a.m.—Ouverture, assemblée générale—Buts de la conférence, Rapports et Nominations.

- ☐ 1.00 p.m.—Lunch—(préparé par la EIC).

- ☐ 2.30 p.m.—DISCUSSIONS D'AFFAIRES, Ingénieurs et autres professionnels en construction, membres et représentants de la Commission d'Urbanisme. Sous le patronage de la EIC.

OU

- ☐ METHODES D'ORGANISATION DES CITOYENS. Films, étalages et discussions (CPAC).

- ☐ 7.30 p.m.—Dîner—Adresse présentée par un citoyen américain de distinction (préparé par la EIC). NORMANDIE ROOF.

Vendredi le 3 octobre

DISCUSSIONS INTIMES

- ☐ 9.00 a.m.—Logement.

- ☐ 11.00 a.m.—L'entourage—Rapport entre le logement et la circulation, les moyens de récréation et d'éducation.

- ☐ 1.00 p.m.—Lunch—Adresse sur ce qu'a accompli l'Urbanisme en Amérique, présentée par M. Hugh Pomeroy, Directeur de Westchester County Planning Department. NORMANDIE ROOF.

- ☐ 2.30 p.m.—Excursion en autobus dans Montréal. Départ de L'HOTEL MONT-ROYAL. Visite au Département de l'urbanisme de Montréal.

- ☐ 5.00 p.m.—Réception à l'Hôtel de ville.

- ☐ 8.45 p.m.—"THE VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS IN THE BRITISH PLANNING SCENE"—Adresse présentée par M. F.-J. Osborn, Président de l'Exécutif, Town and Country Planning Association.

Samedi le 4 octobre

- ☐ 9.00 a.m.—Le Rôle des citoyens canadiens dans l'urbanisme. CARDY HALL, HOTEL MONT-ROYAL.

- ☐ 12.30 p.m.—ELECTION DU CONSEIL de 1947-48.

(REMARQUE: Une conférence nationale sur le logement sera tenue samedi après-midi, le 4 octobre, sous les auspices de la National Committee on Housing. Les délégués de la conférence de la CPAC sont invités. Si vous vous proposez d'être présent à cette assemblée, veuillez en aviser le Secrétaire, National Committee on Housing, M. George T. Bates, 80, rue Sackville, Halifax, N.S.).

Renvoyez cette formule à:

ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE D'URBANISME
Chambre 361: 56, Rue Lyon, Ottawa, Canada

co-operative building

—from page three

houses began in the late fall of 1945. Some building was done that winter, but little progress was made until the following spring when most of the remaining houses were started.

By the fall of 1946 families were moving into somewhat incomplete houses surrounded by piles of mud. Ten houses are now occupied and four more are ready for occupancy. Some sodding and planting has been done and the community is beginning to look quite attractive.

Immediately to the north of Heathbridge Park the Institute arranged early in 1946 to purchase some 9½ acres to provide for an extension project of 40-50 houses. While there were some restrictions on the size of house that could be built in this area a sufficient number of members wanted to go ahead anyway, so the purchase was eventually completed.

Because the Institute did not have adequate powers to handle the development of housing projects, it was decided to incorporate a co-operative company, Co-operative Residential Communities Limited (CRC), with an authorized capital of \$25,000 and powers to deal in land and materials and to arrange for or actually undertake the construction of houses. Members wishing to participate in a project are required to subscribe at least \$100 to CRC's capital stock. Those who wish merely to purchase household equipment through CRC are required to subscribe a lesser amount, and there are also associate members who receive the bi-monthly CRC News and other educational material.

CRC took over the option which the Institute had on part of the Extension property and arranged to purchase other small parcels adjoining. The original group who wanted the project financed the down payment on all this land and approved the community plan prepared by the architects. Lots vary in width from 43 to over 70 feet, fronting on quiet residential streets, planned to discourage through traffic. Park areas have been set aside within the project to provide recreational areas for the children close to their homes.

When the plan was surveyed and registered the lots were sold to members, who signed at that time a purchase agreement form which had been drawn up by the group's solicitor as a result of the experience gained in developing the original Heathbridge Park. This agreement is framed so as to prevent speculation in the properties, and to bind each member to pay his share of development costs within a specified period of time. CRC retaining the right to repossess the property if payments fall in arrears.

A number of new house types were developed for this project, including a basementless bungalow, and a basementless two-storey house with utility rooms on the ground floor. Some of the bungalow plans have been modified to storey-and-a-half plans with plumbing merely 'roughed in' on the second storey. In these the second storeys can be finished later as families expand to fill them.

Sewers and water mains have been installed in the Heathbridge annex property, and have been paid for

outright. The township has now required that the roads and curbs be paid for outright as well. This will result in property free from local improvement taxes.

In addition to individually owned homes in planned communities the group has ventured into the co-operative apartment field. Some of the members who had lived in such projects in Europe wanted to do so here, and a site was selected, plans partly prepared and a sizable group of participants gathered; but when adequate financing under NHA was impossible the project had to be shelved.

A fourth development known as Sheppard Park is being developed on about 15 acres in the suburb north of the city. Lower land costs and lower restrictions on size of house will make it possible to bring down costs considerably in this development, which contains 29 lots ¼ of an acre in size surrounding a large park area and bordering on a ravine.

To date CRC has remained an organization which deals in land for the benefit of its home-seeker members, and deals in a limited number of services, materials and household equipment for those same members. As it grows it will gradually integrate within itself more and more of these services and products, with the idea of combining for the average man the made-to-measure features of privately built homes of the wealthy and the mass-production economies of a speculative builder's operations on a large tract of land, all within the framework of good neighbourhood planning. The ultimate aim is a co-operative housing organization in which design, land, materials, financing, building equipment, labour and other services are all combined under one management and owned by the people who buy the end product of it all. The cost of all these items can be brought down by channelling all the individual design and location preferences and building contracts through the one organization, and on a small but growing scale that is what CRC is doing now.

The co-operative way of building houses is essentially a matter of first lining up a group of prospective home-owners; then building a community to suit their needs as they themselves define them. The usual commercial procedure is the reverse: to build a number of houses and then look for customers. The advantage of the co-operative method to the buyer lies principally in the fact that he himself participates in the whole development program for the purchase of raw land down to the completion of his own house and his neighbours'.

The time involved in this process helps the prospective home-owner to develop a fairly critical knowledge of exactly what is needed to meet most adequately his own and his family's needs in housing and in neighbourhood planning. On the other hand the ordinary private builder is not really in very close touch with the market for housing because the sales of newly built houses are actually a very small fraction of the total transactions in shelter. Consequently it is only the very exceptional private builder who builds the sort of houses and communities which can be expected really to satisfy the home-seeker's needs and tastes throughout the long life of a house. In other businesses changes in taste and demand have much greater influence on what

the author

Assuming that they write as well as build co-operatively, we approached Co-operative Residential Communities as a group for this article. While the end product contains ideas they hold in common, the actual writing is by Mrs. Harriet Edith Lang. Mrs. Lang was born in Oshawa, Ontario and graduated in Fine Art at the University of Toronto. After a year of graduate work in housing and town planning, she was employed by the Toronto Planning Board, and later by the Ontario Department of Planning and Development. We don't think CRC pretend to have a way of getting many houses built that would *not* otherwise be built; but they have a good deal to show about how to do better with those residential neighbourhoods that otherwise *would* be built—willynilly.

is made, both because of the greater volume sold in the *new* market, and because of the increasing use of consumer and market research techniques. But the co-operative method that CRC is developing in Toronto (and similar groups elsewhere) can provide in the housing field the link usually absent between demand and supply: the consumer himself, rather than the producer or the banker, decides what shall be built.

new officers elected in divisions

The By-laws of the Association call for Divisional Annual Meetings to be held by June 30th (see LAYOUT FOR LIVING No. 6 page 2); and the name of the person to represent each established Division on the national Council is to be given to the Secretary-Treasurer at least sixty days before the Annual General Meeting of the Association. Listed below are the names of six persons named to the new Council according to the By-laws. There will be an election at the General Meeting (in Montreal in October, see page 5) to fill the remaining seven places in the new Council. The Nominating Committee are required to suggest the names of at least seven persons to that Meeting; their Report will appear in the next issue of LAYOUT FOR LIVING. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the Annual General Meeting.

Named so far to the New Council are:

Harry E. Beresford	(Manitoba Division)
Eugene Chalifour	(Province of Quebec Division)
Alan Deacon	(Ontario Division)
R. T. Donald	(Nova Scotia Division)
W. Brand Young	(British Columbia Division)
Maj. Gen. H. A. Young	(Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation)

Names and addresses of new Divisional Executive officers:

British Columbia

Chairman: J. A. Walker, Town Planning Commission, Royal Trust Building, Vancouver.

Secretary-Treasurer: J. T. Gawthrop, Bureau of Reconstruction, Victoria.

1st Vice-Chairman: G. E. Baynes, 1010 Seymour St., Vancouver.

2nd Vice-Chairman: A. G. Graham, 3112 Quadra St., Victoria.

Manitoba

Chairman: C. F. Greene, 224 Curry Building, Winnipeg.

Vice-Chairman: Chris Fisher, 67 Claremont St., Norwood.

Hon. Treasurer: E. D. Honeyman, 915 Paris Building, Winnipeg.

Secretary: Mrs. W. J. Shepherd, 605 Time Building, Winnipeg

Ontario

Chairman: W. Harold Clark, 75 Spadina Rd., Toronto.

1st Vice-Chairman: James Dutton, 225 Stewart St., Peterborough.

2nd Vice-Chairman: Mrs. Cameron Montrose, 1753 Dacotah Dr., Windsor.

Secretary-Treasurer: Eric W. Baker, 330 University Ave., Toronto.

Quebec

Secretary-Treasurer: George Mooney, 806 Dominion Square Bldg., Montreal.

Nova Scotia

Chairman: R. T. Donald, 6 Baker's Drive, Armdale.

Vice-Chairman: Ira P. Macnab, 33 Mumford Road, Halifax.

Secretary-Treasurer: Mrs. J. P. Dunaresq, 17 Blink Bonnie Terrace, Halifax.